a miscellany of fortean curiosities

The News

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HAPPY BIRTHDAY - CHARLIE!

The second annual convention of the International Fortean Organisation also celebrates the Centenary of the birth of Charles Fort. It will be held on the 9th,- 11th August this year in the Shoreham Americana Hotel in Washington DC. The registration fees for the Fortfest 74 are $10 for INFO members and $16 for non-members. The events will cover the range of Fortean interests and include films, lectures and discussions - last year there was a demonstration of Fort's ludicrous game of Super-chequers played with armies of men on a board with thousands of squares. Further details may be had by writing to the INFO-USA address: PO Box 367, Arlington, Va 22210, USA. We will be bringing you news of the various events and speakers, as they are known.

For our part we join the Celebration by initiating a series of articles that will examine Forteanism today - reports from the Front Line against the Unknown. We hope too that they will be controversial and promote discussion and creative reaction. We must never become stagnant or complacent - it will do us good to stand back and critically re-appraise our aims and methods. The editor attempts to put the context of the discussion in an introductory article on p5. We will welcome contributions to the great argument from any quarter.

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE.

We present an illustrated article by Mary Caine on the terrestrial Zodiac of Glastonbury. You have probably heard of them from books like Brinsley Le Poer Trench's 'Temple of the Stars' (formerly 'Men among Mankind'.) published in paperback by Fontana - but such books rarely show any illustrations of the Zodiacs of Britain. We thought it about time to remedy that... so you will find one of the Mysteries of Britain on p8. We also feature a short follow-up to the Llandrillo incident by William Porter on p4. His main article was too long to fit this packed issue and will be presented in NEWS 5.

ADDENDA: NEWS 3.

1) p4 - 'Pigs on Rampage'- It has since come to our attention that this incident was also reported in INFO Journal 10. p16.
2) p11 - 'Man dies in Blazing Bed in Salford' the source of the story should have been noted as Manchester Evening News, 8 Jan 74.
3) p12 - 'Play stars Local Ghost'. The story was quoted directly from the clipping so the reference that "we may yet be publishing certain documents in our possession" refers not to us but the author (unnamed) of the article.
4) p6 - 'Family disappear in Russian Desert'. We somehow missed the ending of the story - so you will find it in this issue under 'Disappearances'.

CONFUSION DEPT.

The editor is going through a period of moving to new employment (mainly looking for same) and the domestic chaos that entails. So, pawn of Destiny that he is, he humbly wishes to apologise in advance for any interruptions in the schedule for the NEWS, that become unavoidable.

NOTES
aerial curiosities

FREAK CHICKENS LAY EASTER SURPRISE.

Two freak chickens are laying coloured eggs for their owner Rita Freeland, a vetinary Nurse, of Worple Road, Epsom,Surrey. The two share their coop with six other hens whose eggs remain the normal colour, while Blanche lays bright blue ones, and Freckles's are green. This seems to scotch the obvious idea of something in their

feed, and indeed, Rita seems to have checked that out. Both chickens hatched from eggs bought from a chicken-breeder. An agricultural eggspert said: "This is a very rare occurrence, although coloured eggs were quite common in the Middle Ages. It is caused by an unusual combination of genes." (Daily Mirror. 7 April 71. Credit: Anthony Smith.)

FLYING BACKWARDS TO CHRISTMAS...

A letter to the Daily Mirror,(18 Feb 71) from a Mr B Jupp of Brighton, Sussex: "Driving across the marshes towards Rye recently, I saw a wild goose flying backwards across the road and adjoining field. When I told my friends at work, they all laughed and said it was impossible. Is it; do you know?" Areasonable question. We don't know - do any of you? Anthony Smith, who sent us the note, says: "I remember seeing much the same thing when I was a very small child, but the memory is so hazy now that all the details are gone."

appearances

A SINISTER FORCE.

This is an excellent example of the inadequacies of our categories (which we will revise for the Index, onwards). However, for the present, take it as a story of something nasty turning up in the first place, despite its comings and goings since then. The story is from the San Francisco Examiner and Chronicle-Sunday Punch. 17 Feb 74. Credit: Loren Coleman.

By John Ryan
Chronicle Foreign Service

Nairobi

A STRANGE beast — believed by superstitious tribespeople to be a monster — has been running amok in the Mayanja district of Kenya.

The beast has been described as a combination of lion, leopard and dog and has eluded all hunters. It has been devouring sheep, goats, calves and dogs in mud-hut villages over a large area. Other stories tell of a giant cheetah on the rampage.

Kenya Game Department officials have been called in to end the monster's reign of terror. Some villagers fear their children will be taken by the marauder, which has been active for three months. The last lion to be seen and killed in the district, 50 miles square, was over 20 years ago. Leopards are equally rare.

★ ★ ★

THE BEAST has been described as "having the claws as well as the stubbornness of a lion, the teeth, neck and head of a tiger, the yellow and black spots of a leopard and a tracking smell of a dog."

One night, a team of game wardens tracked the animal, which was chasing a jackal. They shot and killed the jackal but the monster — believed by the people to be a bewitched animal bearing a charmed life — escaped unscathed.

Assistant Minister for Agriculture Joseph Khaoya, whose constituency is in the area, says that some families were so worried about their livestock that they had brought goats and sheep into their homes.

★ ★ ★

SOME Mayanja residents have suggested that the monster was set free from a cage by Asians fleeing neighboring Uganda as the victims of a sweeping "Africanization" program by General Idi Amin. Others speak of legends related to visits of strange creatures to Mayanja long ago, signifying disasters or unusual happenings.

"The animal seems to be surrounded by a weird glow and it can disapear, it seems, at will," said the headman of one village. "We urged the government to kill this strange thing quickly and restore safety to our livestock and children. We fear it will attack children when its other prey is scarce."

★ ★ ★

DURING four years beginning in 1945, a fully grown bull elephant came down from a nearby mountain and ravaged the peasant farmers' crops.

"He was followed by a lion and a fierce buffalo," the headman said. "But there was nothing ghostly about them, and in the end we were able to kill all of those raiders. But the monster, rarely seen in the day, comes and goes in safety."

Game wardens plan to set camouflaged pit traps in the hope of catching the beast alive.

IN-EGGS-PLICABLE.

Ken Sainsbury is used to digging-up old bones buried by dogs in his garden in Aylesbury Road, Bierton, Bucks. But yesterday he dug up..an egg. "I can't figure out how it got there... there are no chickens near us." He said. The report mentions the egg being a 'new laid' one. (Daily Mirror. 4 Sept 68. Credit: A. Smith.

PUTTING IN THE BOOTS.

Worshippers at a church near Stockholm, on the way to morning service, found that someone had perched a tractor on top of the steeple. How it had been done is a mystery. Practical jokers in New York struck when a church advertised for a second-hand settee for its youth club. They broke into a furniture warehouse, took 42 settees, and jammed them into the church's main aisle. The operation must have taken several journeys - yet nobody saw them arriving. A police official in Ecuador announced that two of his men had been robbed of their boots while they slept at a police post. He appealed for the return of the boots, and during the night, jokers blocked the entrance to his HQ with a pile of 3000 boots, which reached the ceiling - yet again nobody saw them dumped. (Weekend. 30 Oct 70. Credit: A Smith.) As Forteans we find such jokes by human or other agencies directly pertinant and funny into the bargin. However, as a general guide, this little collection is virtually useless to any Fortean research since there is no reference to the source or date of the original events.

BOYS FIND CLIFF-TOP GOLD INGOTS.

Nicholas Casley and Stephen Richards were chasing a rabbit when it darted into a hole on top of a 200ft cliff at Pentreath, Cornwall. They started to return along a path and saw a dull-yellow ingot on the ground. A search revealed seven others - and the next day when they returned with their fathers they found eight more. The ingots were about 1½ inches long and 'the thickness of a pencil' - together they weighed about 14oz. Dr. Andrew Seager, head of the geology department of Birkbeck College, London, who was staying at a cottage nearby, took them to his lab in London. "There is no doubt that it contained a large proportion of pure gold, although something had been added to make it harder." The police said that it may have been part of a robbery. or that 'a shipwrecked sailor could, at some time in the past, have lost his moneybelt while clambering to safety.' Further search was dangerous warned the police, because of repeated subsidence and

rockfalls - though the boys' fathers added they had made sure there was no more lying about. It seems a puzzle as to how tiny ingots of gold can be found lying openly on the ground on top of a cliff. Did someone throw them away, or drop them? Exposure by subsidence or erosion, although suggested, seems to us highly unlikely. Nor was any mention made of finding of a moneybelt. Worthy of note is that there was equally no mention of any hallmarking by which ownership or the minters could be traced. It was suggested then that it was part of some smuggler's gold. Well - however it got there, waiting for the first keen eyed person to come along - a Coroner's inquest was to be held to decide whether it constituted trove or not. Sunday Express 18 Nov 73.

blasts, quakes, lights

Last issue we promised a report on the Llandrillo incident (see N3, p16/17) - William Porter has sent us the results of his investigation - but unfortunately it is too long to fit into this issue: so we will definitely have it in News 5. In the meantime however, parts of Wales were subjected to more subterranean tremors and William Porter also sent an account of this - which we present here, shortly.

Upon browsing through Fort's 'New Lands' again we were struck by the number of incidents therein that concerned the simultaneous occurrence of earthquakes, lights and mysterious explosions - and indeed all the reactions of 'specialists' had been met before and anticipated by Fort. Let me quote from chapter XXIV:

"An explosion in the sky, and its vibrations were communicated to the earth below, with all the effects of any other kind of earthquakes. Back in our earliest confusion of the data of a century's first quarter, we had an awareness of this combination and its conventional misinterpretation: that many concussions that have been communicated from explosions in the sky have been catalogued in the lists of subterranean earthquakes.....At times when we think favourably of this work of ours, we see in it a pointing-out of an evil of modern specialisation. A seismologist studies earthquakes, and an astronomer studies meteors; neither studies earthquakes and meteors, and consequently each, ignorant of the data collected by the other, sees no relation between the phenomena."

In that chapter Fort mentions the great event at Reading on the 20th Nov 1887; an aerial explosion, meteoric lights and an earthquake. In his chapter XXIX is an account of the 'Terrible Earthquake of Hereford' of 17 Dec 1896: a series of 9 concussions, and mysterious lights accompanied it. It seems that this same combination of events was no stranger to the area, since they happened in Oct 1661; 6 Oct 1863; 30 Oct 1868; 2 Nov 1893; and 25 Jan 1894.

Still on the Hereford Terror - Fort has this to say, which is very pertinent to our present subject: "In an appendix to his book, 'The Hereford Earthquake of 1896', Dr Charles Davidson says that at the time of the quake (5.30am) there was a luminous object in the sky, and that it 'traversed a large part of the disturbed area'. He says that it was a meteor, and an extraordinary meteor that lighted up the ground so that one could have picked up a pin. With the data so far considered almost anyone would think that of course an object had exploded in the sky, shaking the earth underneath. Dr Davidson does not say this. He says the meteor only happened to appear over a part of this earth where an earthquake was occurring, 'by a strange co-incidence'." And, friends, those damned co-incidences are still occurring. Its time they were looked into.

- MORE WELSH RUMBLINGS - by William Porter.

Wales continues to quake under another series of earth tremors and mysterious explosions. Two earthquakes shook South Wales at 6.12pm and 8.20 pm on February 25th. Both earthquakes were of greater magnitude than the reputed Llandrillo incident on January 23rd.

The Western Mail reported on February 26th that the tremors had caused damage in homes from Bridgend to Abergavenny. Newport was worst hit, but the tremors were also felt in Cardiff, Cwmbran, Trelewis, Pontllanfraith, Abergavenny, and Blackwood.

I was able to secure a first-hand report from Mr. John G Williams, a solicitor in Abergavenny. "On 25th February, my wife and I were sitting on the couch in our lounge at about 8.10pm when we were both looking down at a newspaper which listed the London plays and shows... Suddenly we felt a terrific concussion as though a lorry had ran into the side of the house, which could not happen as it is back some 20 yards from the side road. I saw the daffodils flutter in a vase on the table and heard the china in the alcove above rattle."

Reports came from Newport of cracked paving stones and telephones put out of order. Gwent police reported damage to the local houses; furniture had been overturned and pictures fell off walls. At Pontypool many families rushed into the street when the second tremor occurred at about 8.20pm. Further east at Llangybi, the villagers said the second tremor was accompanied by a rumbling. From Monmouthshire came reports that both tremors were accompanied by explosions which were mistaken for sonic-booms. A statement issued by the Institute of Geological Science's Seismology Unit at Eskdalmuir in Dumfriesshire indicated that the second tremor was considerably stronger than the first and large enough to be detected on instruments throughout the world. It was the view of Dr. Patrick Wilmore, head of the Institute, that these tremors and the Llandrillo incident could be linked. He said: "What is typical of all earthquake belts is that they go through periods of enhanced activity and then quieten down again."

....continued on p7.

Introducing a series of articles which will re-examine Forteanism, its data and its role in relation to Science, and related problems.

Where do we go from here-there?

by ROBERT RICKARD

As we celebrate the birth of Charles Fort, from whom we derive our name for collections of anomalous phenomena and a particular attitude towards them, I think it a fitting time to re-evaluate just what we mean by Forteanism. It is 42 years since he died - can we be said to be any wiser about the baffling complexity of the manifesting universe? - I think not. We have gathered more data to be sure - but Forteanism has come up with no coherent 'dynamic'or theory that can be explored scientifically, in that time, that is any advance on the total-universe organism proposed by Fort.It is not the part of Forteanism to suggest explanations or theories - but detatchment is hard to practice, so most Forteans have pet suspicions that are the beginnings of theories. But this is a vast subject and one to which we shall return again in future issues. For now, let us look at our beginnings.

Fort showed that Science, despite its vaunted impartiality, was not - the weakness was that its scientists were men first, and subject to human failings. As Dr. Hynek put it: "Science is not always what scientists do." (1) An elementary observation, you might think, but nevertheless, one which has deeply affected the evolution of western science. During the 1910s-1930s, Fort attacked what he called 'exclusionism' - an arrogant process of bigotry whereby phenomena which do not fit neatly into any known theory are either 'explained' away in a Procrustean manner, or deemed the province of cranks and charlatans and thus not 'worthy' of scientific examination. Both methods produced effective 'excommunication' from the orthodox body of Science. Are we mistaken in feeling that they sense a subtle threat to their neat and tidy view of the Universe? I generalise, of course. Forteanism, by contrast,is a mess of loose ends, and must seem like a horrid nightmare of Chaos. But somebody has to do the dirty washing; and this, Fort tells us, is a position more conducive to reflection on the sins of Pride and the lust for Knowledge.

Perhaps it is hard for some of us to appreciate the fanatical view of Science at the turn of the century - it was the 20th century's answer to Religion, and would save man from himself. Now, we know different, if not better - it is a tool like everything else, capable of being misused. But in those days, it was the supreme accomplishment of Man, himself the peak of a glorious evolution. Society too, has changed, is changing, shuddering, crumbling and reforming, adjusting to the momentous imbalances wrought by the escalation of western Science and Technology. Now, for example, we can no longer accept the popularised view of megalithic man as a hairy cave-dwelling dope - the evidence of their intelligence and sophisticated observational science is mounting up. John Michell writes of "the establishment of the modern European with his materialistic philosophy and science as the highest product of an evolutionary process..." as the "most ugly consequence of Darwinism, sociologically applied..." (2) Michell then goes on to quote Kathleen Raine: "Spokesmen of the new dominant culture speak of an 'advance' from 'ignorance' and magic to 'knowledge' and material science; yet in terms of philosophy, religion and the arts,the same event can only be seen in opposite terms as a decline from knowledge into ignorance." (3) This is exactly the spirit of Fort's feeling that 'specialisation' was an 'evil' of Science that perpetuated shortsightedness and reliance on Dogma.

Fort was labled by the papers of his day as 'The Arch-enemy of Science'- which is simply not true as even a casual acquaintance of his writings will show. He was the deadly enemy, though, of Dogma. He was above all true to the spirit of scientific inquiry - and I think he was both amused and saddened to see the malpractice with the body of Science. He held that, in an absolute sense, nothing could be proved absolutely - Man's knowledge of the local Universe was transitionary and phenomenological - it was a matter of approximating to the Truth. "I conceive of nothing in religion, science or philosophy that is more than the proper thing to wear for a while." Or as John W Campbell put it; that Science is the best educated Guess at any one time. Again,Fort said:"I cannot say that Truth is stranger than Fiction, because I have never had acquaintance with either!" And from this context of opposite Absolutes we derive two fundamental tenets of phenomenological science - That all things are continuous with all other things - and the humility of the observer.

On the principle of Continuity rests the evaluation of what we are doing - or trying to do. Fort expressed the Fortean view of Continuity in the beautiful opening chapters of 'The Book of The Damned.' (4) The phenomenological world of our existenceis an Intermediateness between Absolutes. Man, at least in his present form and confinement, cannot experience these absolutes (eg. absolute Hot or Cold) directly, but only in terms of approximating to them. Fort used the device of the hyphen to delineate these states. Local phenomena can only be interpreted locally, by purely arbitrary sets of references. If we could apply the word Absolute to anything, say a frog, says

Fort, then that frog would be God. Science is based on local definitions that 'exclude' the rest of the Universe from the thing 'defined'- in our terms this is nonsense because the 'included' is continuous with the 'excluded'. Or - it could only apply to a state of Absoluteness, where there is total 'inclusion' and nothing remains to be 'excluded'. This may seem abstruse - but it is the heart of Forteanism, nonetheless. In terms of the Local there can only be approximate definition. We can have Red and Yellow and the oranges in between approximate towards Red or Yellow; but red and yellow are not absolutes, but intermediary between Violet and Green, and so on. "In Continuity, it is impossible to distinguish phenomena at their merging-points, so we look for them at their extremes. Impossible to distinguish between animal and vegetable in some infusoria - but hipopotamus and violet. For all practical purposes they're distinguishable enough. No one but a Barnum or a Bailey would send one a bunch of hipopotami as a token of regard." Scientific method then, must be a gradual approximation to Truth, which in turn means that theories, or beliefs in theories must be temporary. It is the mistake that many scientists, pseudo-scientists, occultists and pseudo-occultists make when they believe the 'laws' of their belief to be consist nt throughout Time and Space, and indeed, any other dimension. Fort suggests that we substitute 'acceptance' for 'belief'; and make that temporary acceptance.

So where does this get us? The nature of Science has changed since Fort's tirades. One reason is that it has broadened the range of its 'definitions' to include a bit more of the 'excluded'. It is facing enigmas that would have been unthinkable even decades ago. Heisenberg's Princip of Uncertainty has become the hyphen between Physics and Metaphysics. Sociologically, things are changing too - with appreciation of the greater cycles of ecology in the ontological organism.

The early Forteans were a counter-point to the Exclusionism of Science - but if Science is becoming more Inclusive, what is left for us to do? Let us be clear that the collection of anomalous data is a task adopted by Forteans - it is not the whole, or the main purpose of Forteanism. "Our expression is that our whole existence is animation of the local by an ideal that is realizable only in the universal...That our whole 'existence' is a striving for a positive state... That there is only this one process, and that it does animate all expressions, in all fields of phenomena, of that which we think of as one inter continuous nexus...that our whole 'existence is an attempt by the relative to be the absolute, or by the local to be the universal...(In this book) my interest is in this attempt as manifested by modern science." (4) Science started out by attempting to give the local the attributes of the universal, and damning or excluding the evidence that conflicted with this purpose - Thus it was the perfect example for Fort's main thesis of Continuity . But it also served the useful purpose of counterbalancing Science - and that underestimated job is far from complete yet. If and when Science becomes all-inclusive, Forteanism will not be dead, but at long-last united with an old friend for which it has long cared, and we will march together in quest of the Truth.

The old Fortean Society, under the leadership of Tiffany Thayer, was composed of men subject to human failings - as are we. In the end its usefulness was buried under cult-reverence for Fort, and its vendetta against Science. Martin Gardner wrote: "It is true that no scientific theory is above doubt...But it is also true that scientific theories can be given high or low degrees of confirmation...When a Fortean seriously believes that all scientific theories are equally absurd, all the rich humour of the Society gives way to an ignorant sneer." (5) That sometimes happened too. Greater than Fort, greater even than his gifts to us of his humour and poetry (and Lord knows we haven't fully appreciated those yet), was his re-establishing the spirit of free inquiry away from being the sole right of Science. He delivered us from scientific superstition.

He also knew the dangers of Forteanism becoming institutionalised, and of the Fortean Society, which he said he would no more join "anymore than I'd be an Elk". He wrote: "The great trouble is that the majority of persons who are attracted are the ones we do not want; spiritualists, Fundamentalists, persons who are revolting against Science, not in the least because they are affronted by the myth-stuff of the sciences, but because scientists either oppose them or do not encourage them." (6) The manifesto of the International Fortean Organisation openly states that it owes no allegiance to the expressions of Fort, or anyother thinker or system of thought. And if we

count ourselves Forteans, then so too must we. This is no betrayal, but an affirmation of Fort's own cherished ideal. He would not want us bound to anything that would hinder free inquiry, least of all a slavish addiction for his own works, about which he wrote:"I believe nothing of my own that I have ever written. I cannot accept that the products of minds are subject matter for beliefs."

This places us in the curious position of searching for something we know nothing about, hoping we can recognise it when we come across it. We know the quest is towards Truth, and the nearer we approach the Positive Absolute, that some call God, the less there is to distinguish between things. Forteans follow a noble tradition, that of the Greek Skeptics, the Mahayana Buddhism of Nagarjuna, the Ch'an and Zen schools of contemplation, and above all the metaphysical Tao. We accept the limitations of man's senses, and that if evolution is to have any meaning for us, it must be in terms of an ability to understand or facilitate (or a greater approximation to understanding and facilitating) the phenomenological universe. And this surely is also the aspiration of Science.

In the circle of Continuity it doesn't matter too much where you start - so we have started with ourselves. I hope the articles we present in future issue will examine some of these problems, as well as reflecting on the state of the 'art' - and above all I hope it will bring out some controversial points. One of the main purposes of Forteanism must be to promote thought and inquiry. Fort said: "I do not know how to find out anything new without being offensive ...I shall find out for myself: anybody who cares to may find out with me." Us too..Us too..

* * * *

Notes:

1) 'The UFO Experience' by J Allen Hynek. Corgi paperback - 1974.
2) 'The Old Stones of Land's End' by John Michell Garnstone Press - 1974. Reviewed on p19.
3) Michell says the quote is from Kathleen Raine 's introduction to her book on Taylor the Platonist. That's all I know about it...but the quote is so apt, I had to use it.
4) Most of the unmarked quotes from Fort are from his 'The Book of the Damned' in the Ace edition, or the Abacus edition, both paperbacks, and essential reading for Forteans.
5) 'Fads and Fallacies in the Name of Science' by Martin Gardner; reprinted by Dover in 1950.
6) Damon Knight's excellent biography 'Charles Fort: Prophet of the Unexplained' currently only available in the Gollancz edition of 1970.

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MORE WELSH RUMBLINGS / cont.

Another earth tremor shook parts of Wales, including Cwmbran, Newport, Pontypool and Abercarn, on the evening of March 8th. This tremor was less severe than the previously reported incidents, and no reports of damage were received. Scientists issued a statement saying South Wales is an area which has small tremors and it is possible that there will be additional quakes in the coming weeks. It is significant to note that South Wales is indeed on the northern end of the world's main earthquake belt, which has caused many of the recent earthquake disasters in the Middle East, but this does not account totally for the mysterious coincidental sequence of events on the mountain near Llandrillo on January 23. It could easily be,that whatever happened that night, was simply a catalyst and trigger for the subsequent tremors and earthquakes.

* * * *

FIREBALL: CARDIFF 18 JULY 73.

Since our round-up of flashes and bangs in Wales in the last issue, it has come to our notice that a fireball was said to have exploded in Cathays Street, Cardiff,during the evening of July 18. A Met. Office spokesman was said to be puzzled since there had been no thumderstorms. From South Wales Echo, 19 July 73.

disappearances

FAMILY DISAPPEAR IN RUSSIAN DESERT:

Profoundest apologies for mislaying the end of the story in News 3, p6 - which should have ended thus:

But the rescuers were too late. Two miles from the car they found the mother and two children dead. In the other direction, they found the tracks petered out on hard ground and no sign has been found of Dmitrenko since,
Sunday Express. 27 Jan 74.

MISSING: TRAWLER 'GAUL' .

On the 14th March there was a memorial service for the crew of the missing trawler 'Gaul' which vanished in the North Sea in early February. The Daily Express of 13 Feb 74 announced the growing fears for the 1100 ton trawler and her 36 man crew. (Credit: Mike Roberts.) Some relatives of crewmen stayed away from the service saying that there has been no sign of wreckage or reasonable explanation (despite extensive searches) for the disappearance, and they did not believe that their relatives among the crew were dead.

MISSING: ATLANTIC BALLOONIST.

Colonel Tom Gatch, left Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, on the 19th Feb in a helium-filled balloon, and headed for France across the Atlantic - and that's the last anyone saw of him. The Daily Express of 25 Feb 74, among other papers, announced the fears of him being lost. All American air and

....continued on p 14

To some of you, this article may not appear to be objective enough - and yet, if it inspires only one of us to set out to satisfy our own criteria for acceptance, to go and investigate, then we think it will have achieved its purpose. It has been revised by Mary Caine from its original appearance in Gandalf's Garden No4, 1969. The maps are based on Ordnance Survey sheets; and the aerial photos by Aerofilms Ltd, Borehamwood. Katherine Maltwood's original work is a book called 'A Guide to Glastonbury's Temple of the Stars' - James Clarke & Co., London, 1929 - and I believe a pamphlet from it is published by The Cokaygne Bookshop, 1 Jesus Terrace, Cambridge, for 75p + postage. My thanks to all those who helped get the various parts together.

The Glastonbury Zodiac:

TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE — TOO BIG TO BE SEEN!

by MARY CAINE

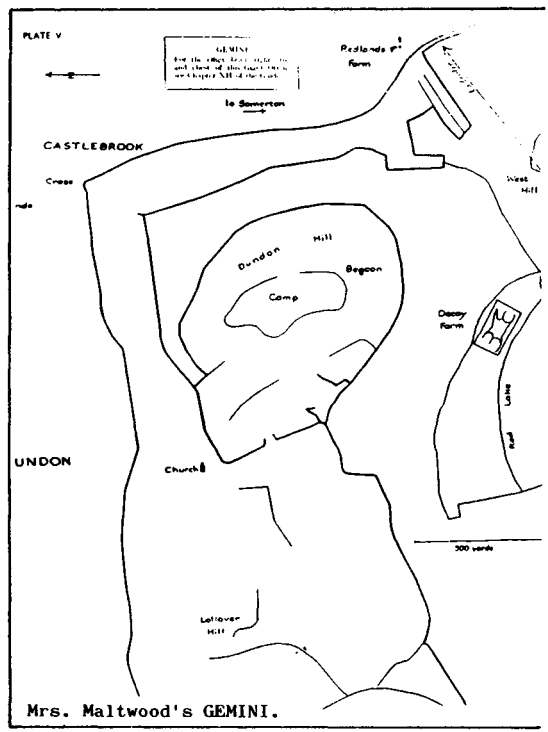
The source of Glastonbury's mystique - the bubbling fount of all its legends - the magnet which attracted so many saints, heroes, kings, pilgrims - is all the more mysterious for being invisible. This is the Zodiac, or Giants of Avalon, claimed by its discoverer, Katherine Maltwood, as at once the oldest and biggest of all Britain's antiquities. It's still largely unknown; ignored by archaeologists. Too Good to be True and Too Big to be Seen.

What! Twelve great signs of the Zodiac laid out in a huge circle from Glastonbury to Somerton, ten miles across? Impossible! Some of the signs measure five mile from tip to tail? Nonsense! Outlined by roads, paths and waterways, all done by Sumerians in search of metals about 2,800 BC? Crazy! Or by Atlantians in search of dry land and a change of clothing? Rubbish! Or by the Forces of Creation, stamping the earth with their own image? Insanity! Helped at nodal points by tumuli, lynchets and other prehistoric earthworks? Coincidence! Hinted at by innumerable place names? Pure Chance! Known to Homer and Hesiod, visited by Hercules, Odysseus, Jason, Perseus, Joseph of Arimathea? You must be joking!

Archaeologists will argue; historians will hiss; but why not try believing in the impossible for a change? The Red Queen in 'Alice' practised until she could believe in at least six impossible things before breakfast. It's exhilarating. Anyway it's a marvellous idea, and if it's not there, it ought to be. The Grey People will get you certified, but the map at least will be on your side, for these figures can plainly be seen on the 2½" Ordnance sheets. The roads which draw them are ancient, whatever they may say (and they will, believe me, they will) - for all were prehistoric paths leading to prehistoric camps and holy places in prehistoric times when people were more beautiful than they are now, and did crazy beautiful corporate things like Stonehenge and Silbury Hill and huge White Horses on hillsides. And the Lord must have loved them because they didn't lack bread and they got better weather than we do now.

Katherine Maltwood, like Schliemann who discovered Troy, must have been laughed at by all the very best universities. She died in 1961, but she won't lie down. Here, she said, is the Original Round Table, with Arthur, Guinevere and his chief knights still seated majestically round it as the twelve Zodiac figures. The Grail was said to be hidden in Glastonbury Tor's famous Chalice Well by Joseph of Arimathea.

Sir Percival, who found it, is Aquarius; here symbolised as an eagle or phoenix, enfolding Tor and town in great pinions like a guardian angel. The old monks knew this, carving an eagle on the Tor's tower for a clue. But why an eagle for the January Water Carrier? This Zodiac has only three human figures; Father, Mother and Son. Did the



Mrs. Maltwood's GEMINI.

Waterman gate-crash later Zodiacs when its Trinity was forgotten? Crested eagle and phoenix in myth denote rebirth, and here the initiate in the solar Mysteries threaded the Tor's tunnel and maze to be 'reborn' with the spring son. Aquarian Ganymede takes off from Ida's summit on eagle's wings - already cupbearer to the gods, for Chalice Well and its Grail are in its beak. Winged Daedalus escapes the maze of earthly reincarnation. Perhaps the round-winged eagle is also Aquarius' Waterpot - the Celtic Cauldron of rebirth. The shape's the same.

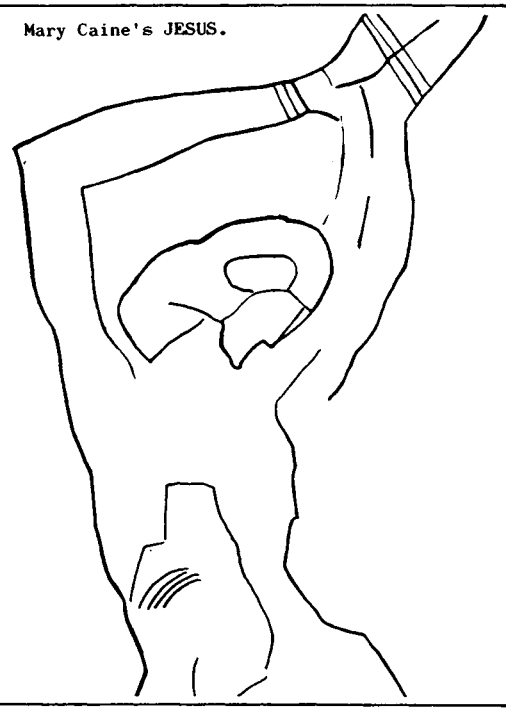
Next to him lies Merlin - Capricorn, bearded goat of aged Saturn. Project his single straight horn across to Leo and you have the summer and winter signs of our Zodiac supporting the Royal Coat of Arms!

Here is the original White Hart, hunted by every prince of folk-lore; cooling his weary feet in Glastonbury's Hartlake - his heart still pounding from the chase at Hearty Moor. Ponters Ball, his horn, is a huge earthwork over half a mile long; once locally known as the Golden Coffin - though only the Zodiac can now remember why. Arthur of Avalon, the dying sun of Sagittarius, has one foot in this December grave. Older by far than the Arthur of history, he was Ausar (Osiris) and Arueris (Horus), sun-god of Egypt; Ahura, Asser, to the Chaldeans who put him in the sky as Sagittarius. The Pennard Hills modelling his horse echo his name - Arddur, and Breech Lane and Canter's Green occur - just where you'd expect! He is not a centaur, but looks like one, being dragged over his horse's neck by a great whale, a monster whose crocodile jaws and snake's head horribly mangle his arm - at Wallyer's Bridge. The name Plunging on the whale remembers the battle raging here between Light and Darkness, Good and Evil. Who wins? Well - a trophy of whale's jaws hangs on Glastonbury's Abbey Gate... Here in Brittania's Zodiac wheel is St. George of England, arms outflung in the patronal cross; Cornish St. Michael, complete with horse and dragon; even Scottish St. Andrew, who as dragon-quelling Indara of the Indo-Aryans, left diagonal crosses on pre-Christian stones all over Scotland. Andrew is a dragon-slayer in Syrian legend too - odd larks for a Galilean fisherman!

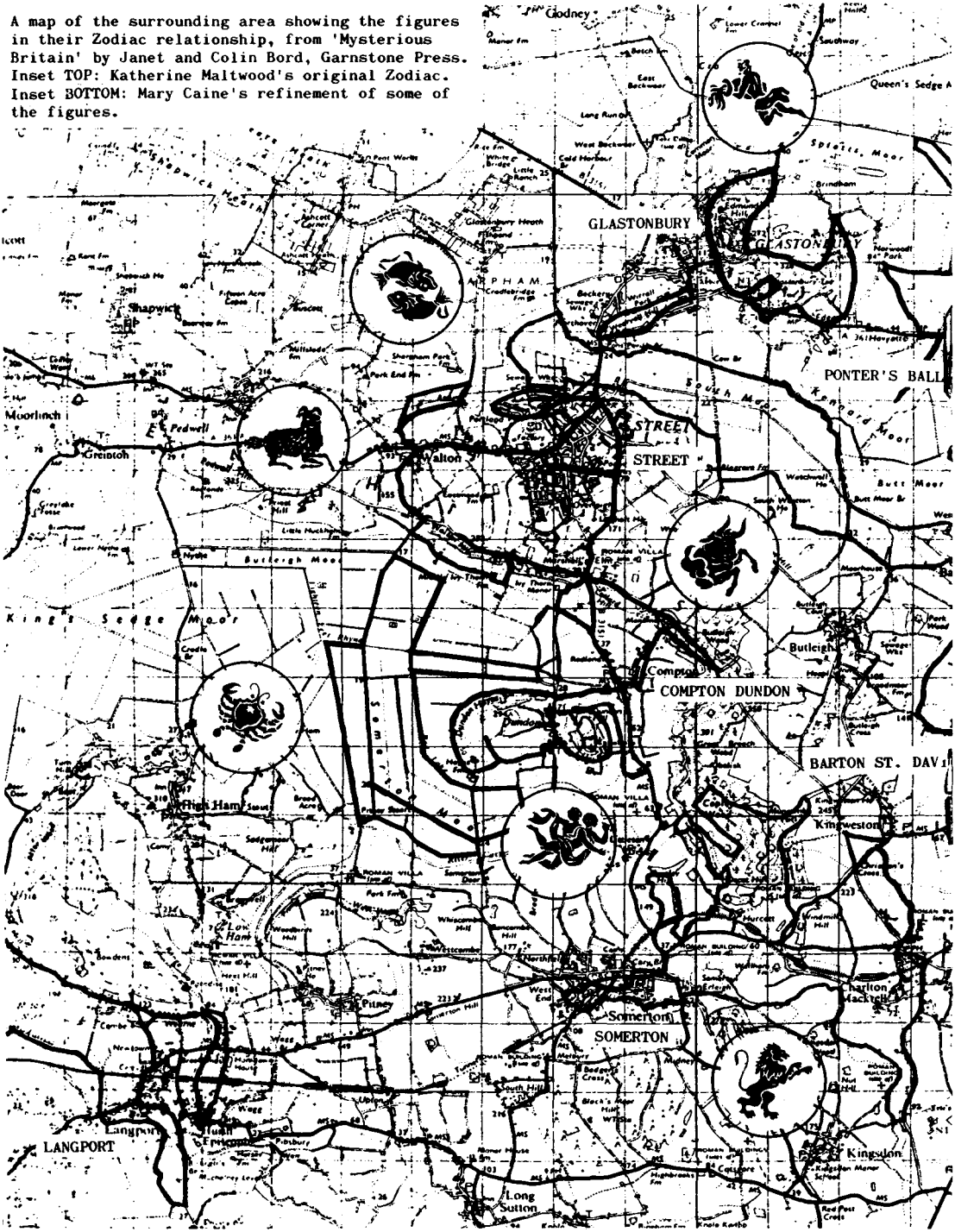
Scorpio, the death sign, is Mordred, gunning for Arthur with his claws. There are no Scales, as these only evolved from his claws in Roman times; but a dove here improves on Libra's peaceable, communicative air-sign. The Holy Spirit (Logos), it flies from dying Arthur's head, announcing to Virgo the new sun's Virgin Birth. The village on his head, Barton St. David, makes him the inspiration of Wales. Dove and David have a Welsh root in common - Dovydd, Divine Messenger. Here too, is Davey Jones in person, homing to his old love Mother Carey at Virgo. Gosling Street on his back makes him her favourite chicken. Silver Street, Hurtle Pool and Tootle Bridge here all proclaim the turtle dove hurtling down from Heaven to Mother Earth. Sad how the gods of the old faith become the devils of the new.

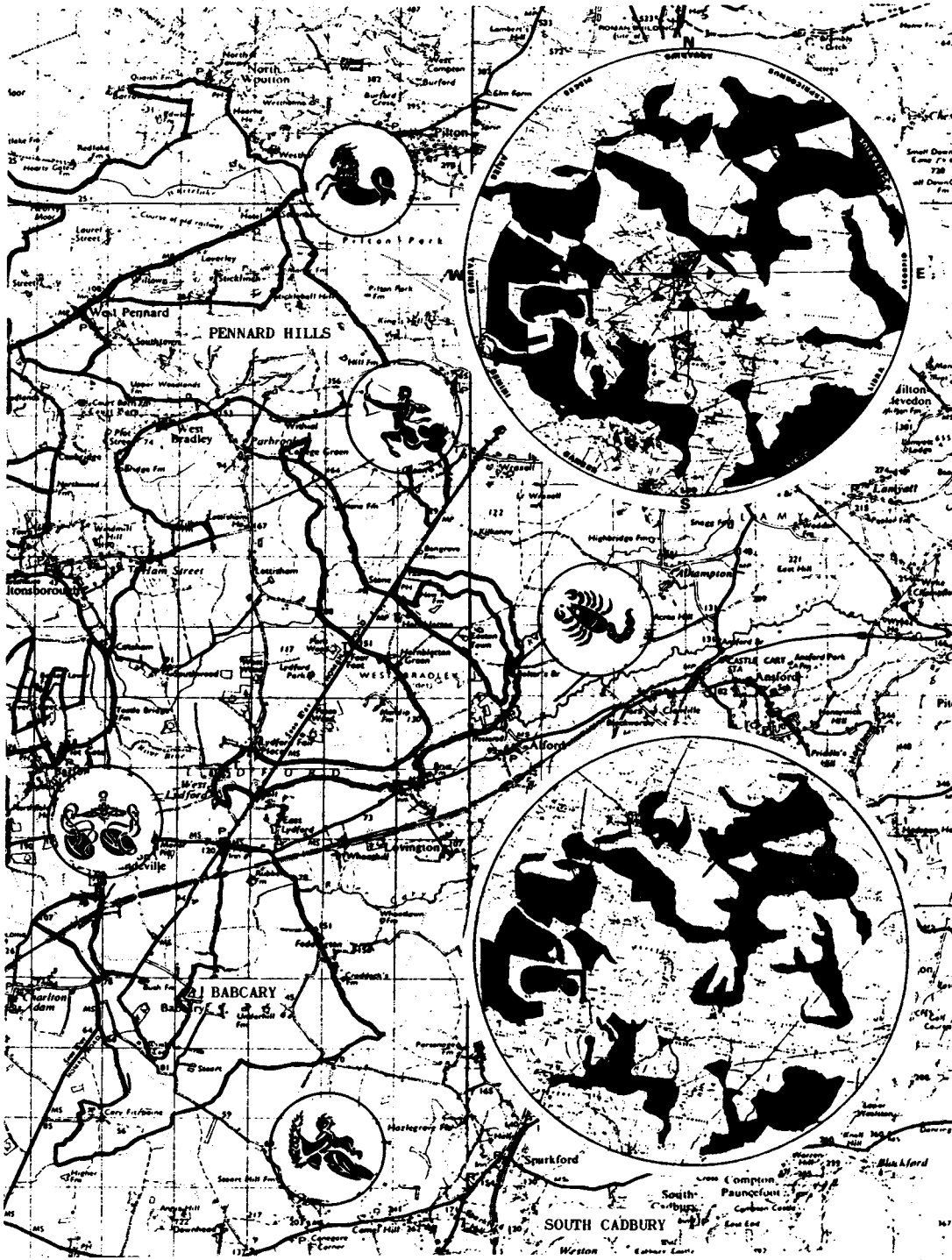
Aerial photograph.

Mary Caine's JESUS.



A map of the surrounding area showing the figures in their Zodiac relationship, from 'Mysterious Britain' by Janet and Colin Bord, Garnstone Press. Inset TOP: Katherine Maltwood's original Zodiac. Inset BOTTOM: Mary Caine's refinement of some of the figures.




PENNARD HILLS
West Pennard
West Bradley
Pilton
Pilton Park
Worth
Wyotton
Lamyatt
Alhampton
Aisford
Alford
Lovington
Spurkford
Compton Pauncefoot
SOUTH CADBURY
BABCARY
Charlton Adam
Ilton
Sevedon
Itonsborough
Ham Street
Woolverton
Lodford
Horsington
Blackford

Drawn by the river Cary, complete with tall hat and broomstick (wheatsheaf), Britain's first Witch has her baby at Babcary already on the way, shown in her pregnant bulge. Her breast has a tumulus-nipple, known as Wimble Toot. (Toot, tot, teat! Or so Tot as a suckling child and the sailor's bawdy tot of rum seem to show.) Her cauldron became the Holy Grail. Kore, Ceres, goddess of harvest - is at once Virgin, Mother and Black Witch - the three-phased Moon. As fickle Guinevere she abandons Arthur's winter sun for lusty Lancelot at Leo. The Earth Goddess prefers her sun-gods hot! Queen Camel village here reminds us of Camelot's Queen; Cadbury Castle, traditional Camelot, guards her still. Even the rigid Fosse Way makes an unaccustomed bow to kiss her hand.

Lying dangerously close to her is Leo; Lleu Llaw, the blazing summer sun-god from whom Lancelot derived. This lover was something of a father-figure, for Guinevere's father was Leo-degrance! One paw of this superb heraldic lion flattens Somerton, once Somerset's capital. Sumer-town? (Arthur, upside-down on the Zodiac Wheel, performs the first Somersault. His dream at the end Malory's Morte D'Arthur, where he hangs inverted on Fortune's Wheel, gnawed by wild beasts, secretly remembers our Sagittarian sacrifice.)

What, no crab at Cancer? Does the ship cradling a baby mark this watery maternal sign? (Argo Navis occupies this quarter of the sky.) Womb or crescent-moon of Isis and Mary, it holds Gemini, the sun's unborn son, ready to sail beneath the earth to his eastern rising. All heads turn west to adore him. Lohot was Arthur's son; here is Galehot (Galahad) in his Galley. The high (haut) sun brought low; the hot sun-set. He and Percival (who also sailed from mortal sight in the sun's, or Solomon's ship) are identical Heavenly Twins; they alone were found worthy of the Grail. Gemini's double shows up in aerial photographs; within the foetal outline appears a bearded youth, astonishingly Christ-like; a prefiguring that makes us wonder with William Blake "And did those in ancient times..?" Ox and ass protect him, for Asella (Ass) and Manger stars both occur in Cancer, and Taurus hovers above him. Only the bull's head and foot are shown. His horns are lynchets curved round Hatch Hill. Collard Hill is on his collar. (Someone has stuck a third horn on his head - the Hood obelisk!)

Place a star-map to scale on the Somerset circle - all the Zodiac stars fall on their earthly counterparts. The equinoctial stars Aldebaran (on Taurus' foot) and Antares (on Scorpio at Stone) were due east-west in 2,800 BC. Sumerian temples were so aligned. Arthur's finger stabbing the circle's centre, his eye and that of the Bull all lie on this line. The Archer, aiming at the Bull's eye, dates this Temple of the Stars! Chance? My foot, says Taurus.

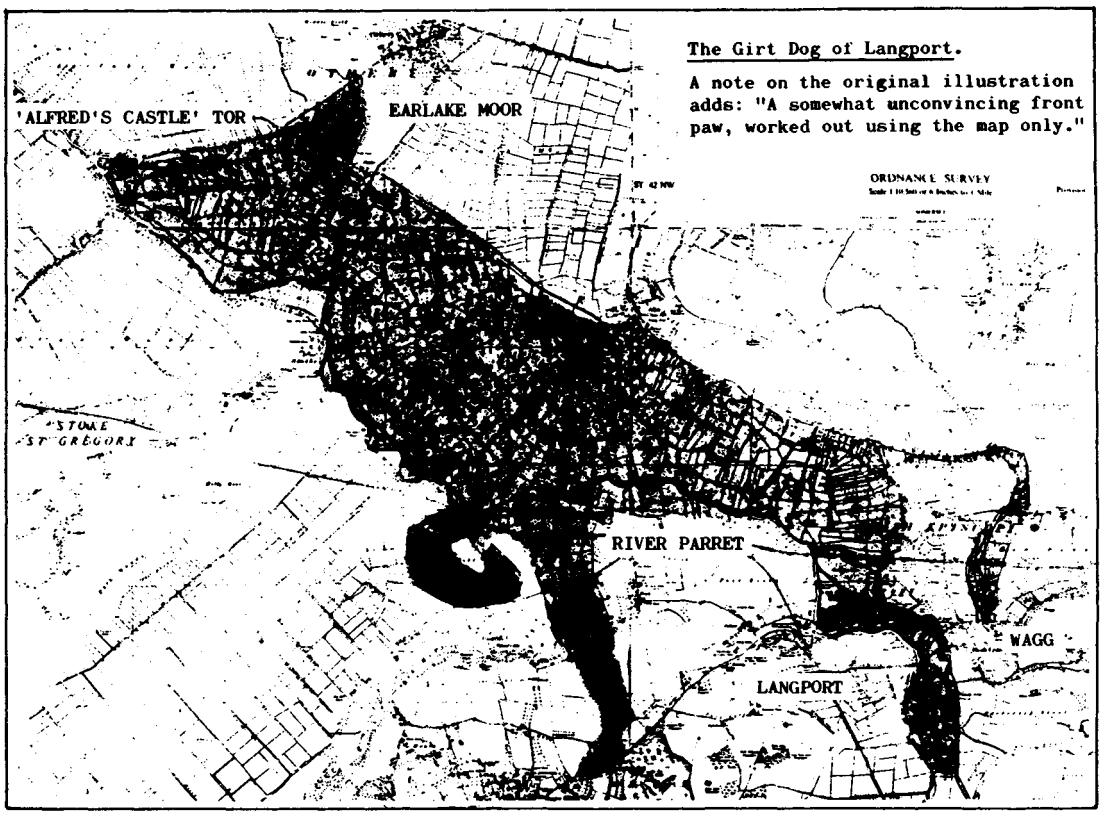
Aerial photograph of Barton St. David, showing the outline of the DOVE, in Libra.

Aries, his head reverted at Street, is Gawain; the spring sun, rash, impulsive, promiscuous. He had to win his battles before mid-day, for then, sun-like, his strength began to wane. They still tan sheepskins on his Golden Fleece. One of the Fishes springs from his head. Charming to find Street famous for its shoes, for in Astrology, Pisces rules the feet. Fisher's Hill leads to Weary-All Hill, the northern fish, the only sign recognisable from the Tor. On the back of this Celtic Salmon of Wisdom, Joseph of Arimathea planted his staff, the Holy Thorn, which has flowered at Christmas and Easter ever since. He chose this spot well. for Christianity's earliest symbol was the Fish. Did he know what he was doing? Did he ever come at all? He may well have done if Cornish legend is true; it claims him as a wealthy Phoenician tin-trader, brother-in-law to St. Anne, who is claimed as a Cornish princess taken by Joseph to Palestine and married to his brother. As her daughter was the Virgin Mary, this made Joseph the great-uncle of Jesus. This ancient belief is echoed oddly enough in Coptic legend. Those feet it seems may well have trodden England's metal track from Cornwall through the Zodiac to the Mendip lead mines; and at Priddy in the Mendips they still say: "As sure as the Lord was at Priddy", while Looe island, Falmouth and other ports cherish sacred memories of his coming. Do we take these Celtic myths (or reject them) too literally? Is our Christ-like Gemini their origin? Esus, Hesus, was the third person of the Druidic Trinity long before Christianity; Taliessin in his coracle, Jason in his Argo, Odysseus the sailor, are but variants on the name of Jesus. Jesus in Welsh is Yesse - Essence of Man. Say 'Yes' and affirm your own divinity.

King Arviragus, the Arthur of the time, gave Joseph twelve hides of land around Glastonbury to maintain his mission. What were these but our twelve Hidden Figures? Old genealogies moreover give Joseph as ancestor of Arthur and his chief knights!

We have now come full circle back to Glastonbury, where we came in. Its Abbey, the greatest in England, was said to be built around Joseph's humble wattle church - the 'Secret of The Lord'. Some said this round church was built by our Lord Himself, others that it wasn't built by human hands. Are these rumours dim memories of an earlier Secret still?

There is one more effigy - that of its guardian dog; its Cerberus - lying (all five miles of him) just south-west of the circle. He is Arthur's dog Cabal - 'The Mysteries'. The Somerset Wassail Song says of him: "The Girt Dog of Langport has burnt his long tail..." - a reference perhaps to the sacking of Langport by the Danes. All in all a hot time for the dog, with Alfred burning his



The Girt Dog of Langport.

A note on the original illustration adds: "A somewhat unconvincing front paw, worked out using the map only."

nose at the other end with his famous cakes. Alfred's Castle, a three-tiered mini-tor at Athelney, makes his nostril. Burnt barley cakes used to be thrown into the river Tone, his tongue. Was Alfred seeking admission to the Mysteries? Were his cakes a 'sop to Cerberus'? If so, he would take his vow of secrecy at Oath Hill, descend into Hades at Hellard and Hellyar, emerging with a sigh of relief at Paradise, east of the tail. He would sail up the river Parret (which draws the dog's underside from nose to back leg at Langport), much as Sumerian Gilgamesh did long before him when he travelled to the far west and "... sailed up the river Parutti to the place where the star-gods dwell..." in search of eternal life. You just can't miss this Dog, with his eye a double prehistoric circle on the aerial photographs, his head at Head Drove, his ear at Earlake Moor, and his tail at - wait for it - Wagg!

If Arthur beckons - if, that is, you need to find the meaning of life, your place and purpose in it - walk boldly past this Cerberus; his tail wags welcome to true-hearted pilgrims. Feast on the ancient wisdom of the Round Table; drink the Water of Life from Chalice Well; join the Quest for the illumination - the inspiration - of its Hidden Grail.

* * * * * * *

MISSING: ATLANTIC BALLOONIST / cont.

sea traffic in the Atlantic were alerted. The 'army in the Spanish Sahara' searched the coast of West Africa with 10 helicopters, since it was theorised that he may have come down anywhere between the Azores and that end of the Sahara. Gatch was equipped with nearly every survival aid including flares, mirrors, 10-day food supply, life jacket, and life raft with location transmitter, etc. But no sign of the balloons or the fibreglass gondola (which I think was florescent pink.) But no sign of anything. By 7th March-somepapers are telling of faded hopes. There is a note by Fort in New Lands which might be relevant here: "A balloon is lost near or over the sea If it should fall into the sea it would probably float and for a time be a considerable conspicuous object..." and he goes on to advise us to look for the mysterious appearance of luminous 'supposed-balloons' in other places at the time.

MISSING: GIRL SCIENTIST.

Police and friends were puzzling over why Jean Baxter, 29, a computer operator at Porton Down chemical defence establishment in Wiltshire, should drive to the coast at Swanage, Dorset, park her car on a hillside beauty-spot, then vanish. Five weeks later, after searches and investigation, there is still no clue...except a full bag of groceries was found on her back seat. Police say that she did not handle any classified material, and is seperated from her husband. Sunday Express 10 March 74.

human curiosities

GAZELLE-BOY IN AFRICA...STREAKS FREE.

French anthropologist Jean Claude Armen says he has seen a boy living in the wilds as a gazelle several times about 35 miles from Rio de Oro, the capital of Spanish Sahara. He appears to be in his late teens and is 'mothered' by a female gazelle. Mr Armen was reporting to the Life Institute in Geneva - the boy, he said, is long-haired, goes about naked, moving in leaps and bounds, though not as fast (or as graceful) as his companions.

"I have watched him approach gazelles and lick their foreheads in a sign of recognition," says Mr Armen, and he added that the boy is able to stand like a human (a curious way of putting it, but we can guess what he means), and has seen him dig for roots with his hands and feeding them to his four-footed friends. Dr Paul Røget, director of the Institute, said that this could be the most fascinating case ever of a human brought up by animals. (Daily Mirror. 1 Feb 71. Credit: Anthony Smith.)

12-YEAR-OLD BOY DIES OF OLD AGE.

Here is a story of Lovecraftian horror - but by all accounts is as real as a wart - the poor kid with the unlikely disease of Progeria, a malfunction of the pituitary gland which regulates the smooth functioning of many others in turn, had the unlikely name of Jomar Henregue Silva. Six months after he was born, in Vitoria, Brazil, he had all his teeth...but they were yellow and crooked. Before he was two-years-old his hair had turned white and began to fall out. He tried to lead a normal child's life but galloping senility left him with wasted limbs and creaking joints. At ten his skin was wrinkled and dry, and doctors confirmed that his blood vessels had hardened like those of an old man - then, his life was over before it had really begun. (Daily Mirror, 29 Jan 71. Credit: Anthony Smith.)

WOTALOT I GOT...

A man with four kidneys has amazed doctors at Farnborough, Hants. So strongly are we conditioned to be wary or fearful of deviations from 'normality' (whatever that is) that the need is to rationalise or to 'defuse'...we are assured that the lucky man is in good health, and that the kind doctors see no need to cut him open and rob him of his bounty.....for the present. The Sun, 4 Dec 73. Credit: Anthony Smith.

illnesses & attacks

What follows concerns the sadistic and largely fatal attack on pets and domestic animals that have at times broken out - something or things with a gory appetite that stalks through our hutches and coops. There have been invisible

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SCAN YOUR LOCAL PAPERS, AND....

assailants and assassins; and while some of the locals in the area of Binbrook Farm, near Great Grimsby, were spontaneously burnt or flaming, something else was killing the chickens. Fort notes a vampiric attack on chickens on the 31st Dec 1904. And again later in January 1905: "Out of 250 fowls, Mr White says that he has only 24 left. They have all been killed in the same weird way. The skin around the neck, from the head to the breast, has been pulled off, and the windpipe drawn from its place and snapped. The fowlhouse has been watched night and day, and whenever examined, four or five birds would be found dead." And in nearby Market Rasen, on January 16th, 57 chickens were consumed in a fire, with no clue as to how it started. For the fuller picture of these grizzly killings that seemed to accompany a series of strange fires upon humans and fires during polergeist-type activities you will have to go to LO! chapter XIV (pages 120-123 in the Ace edition).

From our own files we have a note on 33 piglets killed when a fire swept through their sty at Croker House Farm, Gawsworth, near Macclesfield on 14 Jan 74. (from the Manchester Evening News of the same date. Credit: Peter Rogerson). No indication is given about the cause, or even if it was known. The day before, 24 pigs were killed by 'vandals' in the sty of Leslie Hewitt, in Thorpe Lane, Leeds. (Daily Mail. 14 Jan 74. Credit: Peter Rogerson.) But lets go back to the beginning of our little pile of notes.

MYSTERY DEATH OF COW.

Nothing unusual, you might think, about cows being attacked - it must happen all the time. Sometimes, as in this case, the nature of the wounds gives rise to speculations beyond the usual and expected misadventures of country-life. Attacks were made on a herd of 55 Friesians on the Broomstair Farm, Hyde Road, Denton, of Mr. Stanley Phillips. His son gave this report:

"My wife brought the cows up and we found a newly calved heifer had a deep cut in her udder, which means her milk can't be used at the moment. Another heifer in calf had been very badly bashed on the back legs and it had a number of small cuts. My father went looking for a missing beast - another newly-calved heifer - and found it dead in the River Tame. It had four deep cuts on its back and down its leg and would have had to be destroyed."

The nature of the cuts caused him to add: "We don't know what has caused these things, but if it had been in Africa you would have said it was done by lion. Cows can outrun a man in a field, but someone may have used a dog to pen them, and then attacked them." (Manchester Evening News. 7 July 1969. Credit: Peter Rogerson.) See Ch. IX of Fort's Wild Talents for accounts of humans 'stabbed' by invisible attackers.

SADIST SLAYS 288 PETS.

A note in the Sunday Times for 3 Jan 70 announces that the police have 'their first real clues' to a series of sadistic killings of pets in the Thorne district near Doncaster, which began in the previous October. The police had a dossier on 30 attacks in which a total of 288 animals have been killed - mainly rabbits, guinea pigs and chickens. Many belonged to young children, who were often the first to discover the atrocities.

The last of the raids mentioned - on rabbit hutches in the pit-village of Stainforth - "the killer slipped up for the first time, leaving a footprint in the snow. In addition, the hairs of an alsation dog were found on one of the hutches." My underlining - the lack of footprints on snowy ground where there is one seems a curious detail. And the dog? Do maniacs take their dogs with them when they are bent on their massacres? They might if they were maniacs - but dogs would get excited, and no one heard anything at all. The police seem to think that it is a man: "The man has raided allotments and small private gardens every three or four days." Nice periodicity for a maniac - and yet the police failed to catch him; people failed to see or hear him, despite his regularity.

What remains is an unsolved mystery - a footprint and some dog hairs - left, or carefully placed, like a signature, on the last act. But the people will remember: "Such brutality has been shown in the massacre of these animals that even hardened police officers have felt physically sick." A ghastly thought comes to me - about possible poltergeist connections with all those young pet-owners. That a force that can lift tables, bend spoons, and bruise flesh could equally cause serious damage if it got out of control. And the line of a song ...'You always hurt the one you love...' We are not ghouls - we do not like to dwell on nastiness - but we cannot help feeling that tingle of curiosity when we sense the presence of the Unknown. Forces -uses- primal layers of mind. We continue:

KILLER CHIMP VINDICATED.

Anthony Smith sent us this note, but was unable to give any other indication than it was possibly from the Daily Mirror, and probably 1969. It concerns a court action brought by chimp-trainer Hans Vogelbein against Raymond Sawyer, the Superintendant of three Greater London Council zoos for children. Vogelbein alleged that Sawyer spread a rumour that one of his chimps was responsible for the death of forty rabbits, found mutilated at the Pet's Corner Zoo of Crystal Palace. Sawyer lost and was ordered to pay costs. Nothing is said about the killer that is still free. Maybe they didn't like to think about it?

PROFESSIONAL JOURNALS FOR DATA.

WELSH RABBIT KILLER.

Children were warned to bring their pets indoors at night as police were on the alert for yet another maniac pet-slayer, who has killed more than thirty pet rabbits in twelve raids on back-gardens in the mining village of Gilfach Goch in Glamorgan. The police say that he forces open locked hutches to strangle the rabbits, leaving their bodies on the ground. "Once he put a stray dog into a hutch to savage the rabbits. Another rabbit was found trussed up with wire. Eight rabbits kept by 8-year-old Rhydian Priday, of Coronation St, were found with their necks broken, carefully placed in a line down the garden path." Another signature? We note with interest the detail of the stray-dog - can we presume from the tone that when the hutch was checked in the morning a strange dog was found unaccountably where no dog could have been without a human accomplice? Perhaps the locks were in a condition to suggest that they were forced, the dog put in, and then replaced. Perhaps they were not tampered with at all, and the dog materialised in response to a desire for some rabbit. These are suppositions of course - but if we must stick to a human agency, then ponder on the curiosity of outbreaks of pet-killing among quiet mining villages not long after one another. Anyway, the story is from Daily Mirror. 11 Nov 70. Credit: Anthony Smith.

MOON THEORY OF WOLVERHAMPTON SLAYINGS.

On the night of 9 Feb 71 a rabbit's cage at the back of the Turley's house, 32 Oaks Crescent, Wolverhampton, was smashed apart and the little bunny inside was battered and torn to death. A guinea pig in a nearby cage was untouched. Police and forensic experts were called to the blood-spattered yard and the carcass was taken to a local vet for examination. Mr John Turley advanced the theory that the killer must be affected by the full moon which was evident at the time. We also learn that the killer battered to death chickens and pigeons at two other addresses nearby. (Express & Star. 10 Feb 70.)

The Express & Star of the next day reported that there was a full-scale meeting of police, RSPCA, and animal experts to collect evidence and information to try and find any pattern. There was another killing the night before - a rabbit in in Cherry St, Wolverhampton, and two dogs were seen nearby. Last month in the Coalway Rd/Penn area, eight rabbits and guinea pigs were killed.

In the same paper on the 12th, the police say they suspect a fox which had probably been forced to forage in the centre of Wolverhampton by a 'disease' which 'has killed off a number of wild rabbits.' At the least they suspect two of the killings to be 'fox, stoat or dog'. Superintendent Brian Morgan, in charge of the investigation said: "I am not saying that all the killings were committed by an animal, but our latest tests show this to be the case in the most recent killings."

In the grandest tradition of enquiry-stopping, sure enough, the next day someone reports a fox seen leaping over a fence on the corner of Paget and Compton Roads. It was "as big as a Labrador, and dark brown." Curiously that same phrase crops up in a number of the 'Surrey Puma' reports - whether that has any relevance we don't know. This witness said he saw the same 'fox' twice; a week before and three weeks before. The story was in the Express & Star of Feb 13th. In the same edition is a hammed-up story of a little girl, whose bunny has gone missing - has it become another victim of the horrid fiend? Time passes - yet if it has a head, it is raised again. 10th of Dec, 73, a rabbit is strangled in Bradmore, near Wolverhampton. In the next few days rabbits in Claverly Drive, Warstones, were torn apart. All this is in a note in the Express & Star of 13 Dec 73 - but the main story is about Mrs Harrington of Claverly Drive. A neighbour warned her to bring her rabbit in for the night. The night of the 12th - something came for her bunny, and finding it missing smashed the hut to pieces. "The dog heard nothing. I am sure it was more than a dog that did this." (All credit for the above cuttings to Anthony Smith.)

MANIAC KILLS FAMILY'S PETS.

As if all this wasn't bizarre enough. A brown envelope is pushed through the door of the Jolliffe family house in Priestly Road, Bournmouth. It contains a sheet of paper with the message 'TIMMY IS DEAD'. Timmy was the family's black terrier who had gone missing three days before. The first hint of trouble had come a few weeks before when they found a pet kitten beheaded in their front room one morning. Then Pinkie the duck, and Ozzie the gander went missing from their pen in the back garden. Their son found Ozzie a day later - or rather Ozzie's headless body was found back near the pen. Understandably the family are really frightened - and the police were called but have come to no conclusions. (Sunday Mirror. 28 Nov 71.)

monsters & absms

IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF THE YETI.

Madame Marie-Jeanne Koffmann, a French surgeon, has launched an expedition from Paris to the icy wastes of Siberia for an Abominable Snowman (ABSM). From an analysis of over 400 sightings (presumably from that area) she gives us this description: "Two short legs, covered with shaggy hair, and if he wasn't stooping he'd be near-

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ly 6ft tall. He has long arms, a powerful body, and a small pointed head. His eyes are slanted and his nose is flat." Daily Mail, 14 May 73. (Credit: Steve Moore.) We wonder how she got on..

Daily Mirror, 17 Nov 73 - and an announcement that a Japanese team is going to set out in January to find the elusive Yeti. (We have a cutting from the Daily Mail, 11 Oct 72, that the leader of a Japanese expedition on Putha Hiunchuli in the Himalayas, reported seeing a yeti.) Anyway they set out and sure enough, back comes the word of photographs of 8"x 6" yeti-prints from an 'unnamed peak' in the Annapurna range. Daily Mirror and Guardian, 26 Jan 74. Credit: Steve Moore & Peter Rogerson.

Still smarting after their snub by Nessie, the 15 strong Japanese Loch Ness Monster team promise to return next year with a £30,000 robot computer (that's what it says here). Perhaps they are trying to revive the flagging sales from Toho studios, and we shall soon be enjoying on our screens 'Mothra and Nessie save the world from Ebirah, Terror of the Deeps!' Anyway - the robot was announced in News of the World. 11 Nov 73.

SILVER LAKE MONSTER IN PERU.

This story is verbatim from Independant Radio News, 22 March 74: "Villagers in mountains report a serpent-like monster rising from an icy lake on moon-lit nights, devouring sheep and terrifying villages. North Peruvians claim to have seen a fat silver shiny monster come out of Los Angeles Lake, 12,000 feet above sea-level, following a strong earth-tremor which caused landslides on a mountain near the lake. (Credit: Cathy Purcell.) Hmmm. Curious detail about the tremor!

BRITISH CLIMBER SEES YETI.

The Sunday Mirror of 24 Sept 72, says British mountaineer Don Whillans saw "a strange ape-like creature moving sideways on all fours," during his 1969 expedition in the Himalays. Well...we thought you might like to see a picture of Don himself. (From Sunday Times 30 May 71). Its no wonder the Yeti stay well clear.

ripley or not!

NAME GAMES CONTINUED.

Robert Forrest, who is something of a 'coincidence' freak, writes: "Would it be possible to appeal to NEWS-readers to send me tales of odd coincidences concerning numbers, names places, people - anything? It might be interesting to start correspondences like this - swapping coincidences for UFOs etc." (Anyone who wants to join the game can write to him at: 68 Chesham Rd, Bury, Lancs, BL9 6NA.) Meanwhile his current batch contains the following goodies. The cigar production manager at WD & HO Wills is a Mr Ronald Seagar. (Daily Mirror 9 Jan 74). A packet of rings lost on the London Underground by jewel designers Paul Raven and Anne Buzzard, was found by Rose Crow, who works for the fashion house of Polly Peck. (Daily Mirror 15 Jan 74). This last reminded us of a cutting we..er..lost (blush), but Rob Forrest saw the item on TV news (1 Nov 73), that an escaped Eagle came down to rest for a while in Bird-in-the-Bush Road, which is to be found in Peckham, London.

The staff band of the Royal Army Ordnance Corps at Chilwell has a Major-General Key, a Lieut-Colonel Sharp, and its conductor is a Captain Beat. (Daily Express 12 Nov 73.) The leader of the Woodlands Ladies Choir, West Wickham, Kent is a Mrs. Trill and her accompanist is Mrs. Handy. (Sunday Express. 16 Dec 73.)

Peter Rogerson sent us a clipping from the Daily Mail.(14 Jan 73.) which mentions an article by Sarah Bunney, in Nature, on our present subject. In it she mentions; an international gynaecologist, Dr Zakarish Ovary; the producer of the BBC programme on acupuncture, Chuck Despins; among the attendees at a conference on population control was a Miss Mercedes Concepcion; Dr JM Looney who 'analysed the role blood played in mental disorder'; Dr WR Brain, author of a book on mind and matter; and Dr EG Boring, who compiled a history of introspection; wolf behaviorologist Dr MW Fox; Mr H Fish of the Essex River Authority; and among the botanists, AM Berrie (Glasgow), KD Gardiner (Dublin), BE Juniper (Oxford), RP Moss (Birmingham), and F Rose (London Kings College); GC Cheeseman of the Dairy Research Institute; JW Musty of the Ancient Monuments,Dept of Environ-

ment; PM Chalk, limestone expert from Wisconsin; and finally, DL Coffin, an air pollution expert.

23 years ago, a farmer in Austria found a baby boy on a lake, and named him, predictably, Moses. Three months later miles away near Stuttgart, in Germany, police found a child abandoned in a rowboat on a stream. They called the baby Moses not knowing at the time she was a girl. Now the two are to be married, having met by accident in a German youth hostel. (Titbits. 13/19 Dec 73. Credit: Cathy Purcell.)

scientific curiosities

CORE BLIMEY!

Dr D King-Hele and Dr GE Cook of the Royal Aircraft Establishment, Farnborough, have refined their knowledge of the earth's pear shape. Even ten years or more ago it was clear, as the RAE team put it, that "floating at sea-level at the North Pole, one would be about 40m farther from the equator than an equally undauntable explorer who bored down to sea-level at the South Pole." Now they have put together data from studying 27 satellites and find that the pear-shaped tendency is even greater, with the North Pole growing "a stem" some 44.7m high, relative to the South Pole (Nature, Vol 246, p86.) Relative to the mean spheroid, the stem is 18.9m high, and the South Pole depression is 25.8m deep. The only remaining question is: Where is the great Cosmic Tree on which the Earth grew.
New Scientist. 15 Nov 1973. (Credit: M. Roberts.) Come back Yggdrasil, Midgard needs you....

THROW AWAY YOUR ZOOLOGY TEXTBOOKS!

Once there were the Arthropoda: an extraordinary, successful phylum of 'joint-foot' invertebrates which included the Onychophora, the Trilobites; the Crustaceans such as crabs, lobsters and barnacles; the Myriopods, such as the millipedes; the Arachnids such as spiders and scorpions; and climactic in versatility and ubiquity, the Insects. They were varied, these creatures; indeed, there were more species of Arthropod than of all other kinds of animal put together. But they were so fundamentally similar, with their armour-plate and tough chitinous jaws; so obviously evolved from the more primative polychaete worms (such as the lugworm used as fisherman's bait), that no-one could doubt the essential oneness. They were nature's most supreme demonstration of adaptive radiation about a common theme.

All of which zoological folklore, restated in a thousand textbooks, is, according to Dr Sidnie M Manton of Queen Mary College, London, a load of rubbish. To be an arthropod is not to be a member of a particular genealogical dynasty: it is merely to have achieved a certain grade of organisation. In the same way, a bat is not a bird, simply because both can fly. Indeed, says Manton, 'arthropodism' has arisen at least three times...appearing now as three totally distinct phyla: the Uniramia, including Myriopods, Onchophora, and the five distinct groups of Hexapod (insect); the Crustacea; and the Chelicerata (represented as Arachnids) which may or may not be closely allied with the extinct Trilobites.

Though corroborating her arguments with embryological data, Manton bases her thesis primarily on comparative morphology. One of the weaknesses of the traditional view of arthropod phylogeny - that all forms rose from the polychaetes via a common stock - is that it presupposed the existence of intermediate ancestral types. But there is no fossil evidence for such types, and there are no modern animals resembling those hypothetical types. Manton states not only that such types never existed, but that they could not have existed.

An ancestral type, besides generating future types, must itself be capable of survival; and the hypothetical common ancestor of today's arthropod types would have been functionally impossible. (from New Scientist. 8 Nov 73) Credit: M Roberts.

And then there is, of course, the hypothetical ancestor between modern man and his supposed Neanderthal (etc) forebears. Could 'man' have arisen twice; or more? See 'The Eternal Man' for some ideas on the successive regeneration of Man. Well, while we are on the subject of shudders and quakes within the theory of Evolution, here is an article that appeared in the Sunday Times for 17 March 74: 'A NEW THEORY OF EVOLUTION.'

DINOSAURS ARE alive and well and living (among other places) in Britain. There is, however, no need to be alarmed by this warning just issued by two American scientists. They are not suggesting that there are tyrannosauri in Epping Forest. Their dinosaurs are to be seen every day in woods and fields—they are birds.

The astonishing claim that birds are dinosaurs is made by Robert T. Bakker of Harvard University, and Peter Galton of the University of Bridgeport, in Nature. The idea may mean little to the layman—but it cannot be ignored by fellow palaeontologists (fossil experts).

Bakker and Galton are proposing a drastic revision in the zoological classification of animals, something almost as controversial as altering scripture. Even those who disagree must take the theory seriously.

Conventional ideas about the evolution of dinosaurs took shape almost a century ago and have changed very little since. Briefly they amount to this: some 200 million years ago there was a large and flourishing group of reptiles called thecodontians (the name means that they had their teeth in sockets) from which five separate evolutionary branches emerged more or less at the same time. One became the birds of today; another gave rise to the modern crocodiles; the third consisted of the pterodactyls and their flying relations, all now extinct. The last two were the groups we now know collectively as dinosaurs ("terrible lizards"): the saurischians ("lizard hips"); and the ornithischians ("bird hips.").

According to this scheme of things the name dinosaurs has no strict zoological meaning. It is a relic from the days when the remains were first discovered, before it was realised that there were two distinct groups of dinosaurs which emerged quite independently.

Bakker and Galton have put forward a different theory. They suggest that only three branches emerged from the thecodontians 200 million years ago: the crocodiles, the pterodactyls and a single group of dinosaurs. The dinosaurs, they say, did not split into two until much later. The birds are supposed to have split off later still, as others have suggested recently.

According to Bakker and Galton it is, therefore, meaningful in evolutionary terms to group both both of dinosauri and the birds into a new Class in the technical sense of the word—the Dinosauria. If so the vertebrates would not be divided, as they are at present, into fishes, amphibians, reptiles (including dinosaurs), birds and mammals, but into fishes, amphibians, reptiles, dinosaurs (including birds) and mammals. This, they claim, "reflects more faithfully the evolutionary steps."

The argument is highly technical, but a key point is the idea, which they did not originate, that the dinosaurs were warm blooded. This would be a major difference from the reptiles and there is evidence that dinosaurs may indeed have had warm blood. The microscopic structure of dinosaur bones, for example, is much closer to that of sheep or cows than of cold blooded modern reptiles. And in support of the later development of birds there is the fact that no remains of bird ancestors earlier than the 140 million years old archaeopteryx have ever been discovered, though this is very far from being conclusive as the previous 60 million years have left very few fossil remains of big land animals at all.

Palaeontologists acknowledge that Bakker and Galton have a case, but that is a very different matter from even beginning to consider the major reclassifica-

tion they suggest.
"The proposals are based on three main arguments," commented Dr Alan Charig, Curator of Fossil Reptiles and Birds at the Natural History Museum in London. "First, that the two groups of dinosaurs have a common origin. Second, that they were warm-blooded. Third, that the birds evolved from dinosaurs. I am extremely doubtful about the first point, and it's so new that most palaeontologists have not even had a chance to consider it, let alone accept it. The second and third points may well be true, there are very convincing arguments on both sides, but they are still highly controversial. Palaeontologists are not going to start officially calling birds dinosaurs until they are virtually unanimous on these points and we're a very long way from that."

Bryan Silcock

ufos

DID YOU SEE...

the long (and funny) write-up of the Pascagoula Kidnap Case (mentioned in NEWS 2.p18), in The Rolling Stone, 17 Jan 74? Worth tracking down.

FLYING OBJECT OVER WEARSIDE.

Mrs Margaret Naylor, of Ewesley Road, Wearsode, Sunderland, described the object she saw for six minutes through a pair of binoculars as "a long black oblong, rounded more on top than underneath I saw a red light come round it, then green, yellow and orange, and it seemed as if it was going to go up in flames. Then the lights died down, and it became black again and buzzed around. It hovered over Barnes school and then disappeared. I have never seen anything like it in my life before." This was on 23rd Jan.

Earlier in the day when her son returned home at lunchtime from Thornhill School, he had said he had seen four UFOs together. Then on his way home again in the evening he saw another. "I didn't really believe him until he called me outside and showed me the one by Barnes School. Then Mrs Naylor adds a curious detail: "The object looked similar to a drawing in a book about cavemen. The likeness was really remarkable."
The Sunderland Echo, 24 Jan 74. Credit: Paul Screeton. The more observant among you will note that this sighting is concurrent with the rumblings and lights at Llandrillo (see News 3) and about which we shall have a full report next ish.

CONCORDE IN UFO RIDDLE.

During the Concorde flight to gain information on the total eclipse of the sun in Africa last June, scientists managed to photograph a UFO. Enlargements of a 'luminous dot' that turned up unexpectedly, showed it to be 650ft across. After months of study, French government scientists have now officially listed it as a UFO.
Daily Mirror, 1 Feb 74. Credit: Steve Moore.

Uncle Chao's glee club

COULDN'T BE CORNEA...

A routine X-ray has revealed why 7-year-old Roderick Allsop of Court Lane, Erdington, Birmingham has been troubled by watering eyes for the last five years - an open safety-pin was stuck up his nose. Whaaaaat?!
Daily Mail, 1 Jan 73. Credit: Steve Moore.

THE UNIVERSAL CONTINUITY OF PHENOMENA.

"I had just finished a repair job down a manhole in the road when an old lady came up and tried to make me accept a 10p piece. 'Thanks ever so much,' she said. 'You are the only one who has put the gas right on my stove.' She wouldn't listen to my protests. How do you tell an old lady that repairing the telephone cables could hardly have helped her gas stove?"

A letter in Sunday Mirror. 20 Jan 74.

REVIEWS

'THE OLD STONES OF LAND'S END.'
by John Michell, Garnstone Press, £4.25, 136p, 76 illos, IBSN: 0.85511.370.7.

Garnstone are building up a superb list of titles - and this one tops the lot so far. It gave me some pleasure to hold a book that does graphic honour to the work that went into it, and the message it contains. From the title page, and the splendid double-spread of poem and dedication to 'Charles, Prince of Wales, and Duke of Cornwall' it is clear that Michell is a traditionalist of rare quality.

There are three main sections: The Stones, The Crosses, and finally an essay on the nature of the Megalithic Science itself. Alas, we have too little room to discuss the many interesting aspects of the book - let me just say that apart from its value as a reference work on the Cornish stones (no mean thing in itself), it will stand as an eloquent vindication of Alfred Watkins's theories of the old tracks and their marker/artifacts, since it takes the well-defined area of Land's End and tests those theories out on its landmarks. To this extent we must regret the lack of participation or interest from the various learned professions, and offer thanks for the still small band of dedicated researchers

who abide by the rules of true scholarship, scorning commercial hysteria.

The essay belies its simplicity - it is an excellent introduction to the whole vital and young inquiry, the re-discovery of our past - and manages to sumarise most of what is known about these stone reminders, with some speculations on the great traditions and purposes of our forefathers, things we have long since forgotten. Michell's plea, to try to come to a new understanding of the Earth as a living totality, will not fall on deaf ears among Forteans. We too are groping towards the idea and implications of universal continuity.

This cry is not aimed at the Jealous Professors, but to all those who are seriously interested in studying these ancient artifacts with the seriousness they deserve, and if necessary evolve to new methods of study and understanding. We heartily embrace the call to abandon the chauvinism of scientific specialisation, and its corollary of the myth of modern man's superiority as the crown of creation and evolution.

This disability, of only looking at things from one point of view andexcluding the validity of others, is what Fort called an 'evil of modern specialisation' (see back to Blasts & Quakes). Here, Michell points out that these stones have been all things to all specialists - one of the main reasons we are only now getting round to finding out about one of the most exciting mysteries of this or any other century. For example: just how did the ancient articifers choose their sites to combine meaningful indications of astronomy, geometry, ritual symbology, a living folklore, political and topographical markers, and underground water, with one of holy significance. Or rather it was 'holy' because it was a node for these things - but how did they find such a place? Michell says: "In wondering how a modern surveyor would proceed in the matter, we are projecting our own methods onto the past, investigating the old science by reference to the modern."

Indeed, it can be said that we have solved all the easy things in Science with our vaunted analytical thought, and we are not doing so well with it on the harder problems. Perhaps it's time to turn to more inclusive forms of comprehension - a challenge our ancestors seem to have met and transcended. Give this book to your children (or any children) and help breed a new and hopefully more effective type of scientist.

'NEW LANDS.'
by Charles Fort, Sphere (paperback), 35pence, 206p, ISBN: 0.7221.3627.7.

We also welcome this reprint of Fort's second book - which deals with mainly astronomical, meteorological, seismological and other il-logical data, including the falls of various unsavory things from the sky.

Curiously, Sphere who own the 'Abacus' imprint under which they recently published 'The Book of the Damned', did not brings this out as its companion volume. From what I can gather contractural mix-ups has split their chances of making a set. Also, this edition of 'New Lands' has been re-set, eliminating some of the typographical errors of the Ace edition. Unless you have it already, you must buy it -since it concerns the substance and approach of THE NEWS.

'THE NEW APOCRYPHA'
by John Sladek, Hart-Davis MacGibbon, £3.25, 376p, 20 illos, 10 tables, ISBN: 0.246.10715.4.

There are so few books that deal with the rich panorama of pseudo-sciences and crank cults, that a new one is an event of sorts. "The effort is made to distinguish between ideas which are off the beaten track and those which are simply off the rails." And with these criteria, Sladek sets downhill to give us a critical assessment of Atlantis; fossil astronauts; Velikovsky; UFOs; psychic research; health foods; Kennedy death theories; perpetual motion; Nazi occultism; the Great Pyramid; the Bacon codes; Ted Serios; the I Ching; Cycle theory, and many other loony pastimes.

Sladek also says: "I try to describe them with a minimum of debunking. Although I must confess in advance my own bias against many occult and pseudo-scientific claims." Fair enough! But somewhere on the way his criteria becomes blurred, and his bias slips into a holier-than-thou mocking. I don't know which I find the most exasperating. I certainly think it very sad that after all his effort (and this volume represents a vast amount of reading) Sladek seems to prefer sarcasm and aphorism to compassionate discussion or any kind of constructive exploration, and I find this really lessens the value of this kind of stone-throwing.

However, the book is worth buying for its references and cross-indexing, and for the many areas where Sladek has brought Martin Gardner's excellent 'Fads and Fallacies in the Name of Science' up to date. Of some importance to us is that Charles Fort is one of the very few 'free thinkers' to emerge from both books unscathed - and both have some interesting comments to make on Forteanism (as Theory, and as it is practised), though this applies more to Gardner. Forming as they do, catalogues of human error and gullability, the moral is clear - uncritical acceptance of authority does nobody any service. And I found some worth in reading Sladek from this point - that his infuriating complacency lead me to examine the extent of my own credulity.

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